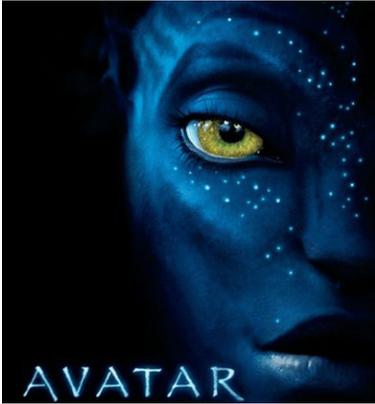


# REMINDER

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## 'AVATAR' and PAGANISM

Movie Review by Andrew Strom

'Avatar' is an enormous worldwide blockbuster movie - the first to use truly lifelike 3D - a huge leap forward that is sure to revolutionize the entire industry. I managed to see the movie in 3D this week, and like everyone I was utterly wowed by the lifelike 3D images and special effects. But there were some things about the film that truly disturbed me.

Maybe we should expect spiritual outrageousness from Hollywood by now. After all, they hardly seem to be able to make a spiritual statement in their movies without alienating every Christian in the audience. (They have been warned about this before. As Michael Medved has stated, Hollywood loses billions of dollars simply by offending Christians and church-goers - who number in the hundreds of millions in America). They often don't seem to care.

But Avatar takes this to a new extreme. Many critics have commented that it has a deeply pro-environmentalist message. And indeed, it seems almost loaded with every touchy-feely New Age environmentalist theme that you can imagine. Some critics are calling it "Dances With Wolves in space." But it sure does look amazing - in fact, stunningly real. It truly is a work of art.

The futuristic story revolves around an ex-marine posted to a planet with rich mining deposits - who has to inhabit an alien "avatar" body so he can infiltrate the local tribe that opposes the mining. Thus he becomes one of these blue-colored humanoids.

Though the film's images are stunning audiences worldwide, the spirituality in it is at the far extreme of New Age. And it is not "subtle" either. It is a huge part of the story. More and more you see the "Gaia"-type 'Earth-goddess' stuff-plus pagan or wicca-like rituals - until half the film seems almost saturated with them.

As I said, most people have grown to expect this stuff from politically-correct and spiritually-weird Hollywood by now. But we are talking here about the most expensive (\$300 million) and most revolutionary new film in history. Surely they have to be concerned that preaching such a message may lose them hundreds of millions of dollars in potential revenue? Apparently not.

It always strikes me as sad when these great breakthroughs in the arts fail to glorify the One who gave us creativity in the first place. And sadly, this is one of those times. And I guess that is why, even after the awe and wonder of seeing one of the greatest visual spectacles of our age, I left the theatre feeling pretty flat. And I wonder how many others felt the same - even non-Christians. I wonder how many left sensing there was something very wrong at the core of this story. I would guess it might be quite a few. (There have been a lot of complaints about the storyline). Even many non-Christians may not like seeing the "Earth mother goddess" getting all the glory. Which is why I think this movie will never take top spot as the most-watched film in history - despite all the money spent on it. And also why I think the sequel will never earn the kind of money that they hope for.

Will Hollywood learn its lesson? I strongly doubt it. ■



## Pastor's Corner

*Robert W. White*

# ***The Great Falling Away: How Satan Is Preparing Mankind For The One-World Religion Of The Antichrist***

Speaking of the day in which the Lord Jesus Christ will return to rule and reign on this earth, the Apostle Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, warned all believers thusly:

***"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition"***  
- II Thess. 2:3

When you take all of Scripture into account, the basic sequence of events of the end of time as we know it is this:

1. There will be a great falling away,
2. The Christians of the Church Age will be removed during what is known to us as The Rapture,
3. The Antichrist will be revealed, then, after 7 years,
4. Christ will return to rule and reign for 1000 years.

Now - what is this great "falling away" that will happen prior to the revealing of the Antichrist and his one-world government, his one-world economy, and his one-world religion?

Well, I **used** to believe and was taught that it meant that there would be characterized by lots and lots of **empty church buildings**.

But I don't believe that anymore. I am now convinced that the great falling away prophesied in Scripture is referring to **buildings full of empty people**.

In Revelation 3:20, Christ Himself speaks of standing at the door and knocking - asking to be let back in - to Christianity during the Laodicean era of church history, which is the time period we live in right now. Simply put, Christ is outside the "church", and, though desirous to be on the inside, only those individuals who purposely ask Him to come into their lives will have true fellowship with Him:

***"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"*** (Rev. 3:20).

Notice the use of the first-person singular:

***"... if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."***

You see, Christ is outside the Church, wanting come in, but He won't be welcome by the whole church, just a few.

"Well, pastor," you might ask, "how did He get out there?"

The answer is **because He was forced out by the people inside**. In the last dispensation of Church History, Christ is **outside the Church** wanting **in**, but He doesn't get in, except on rare occasion, and only then on a case-by-case basis. By and large,

though, many of those who name Him as their Saviour, are, by their very actions and attitudes (some knowingly, others unknowingly) **forcing** him out of the Church.

Of course, this isn't happening all at once - the process was started a long time ago and will take some time more to complete. In the meantime, true, Bible Christianity is and will continue to disappear from the landscape, replaced with Satan's counterfeit.

What's both simultaneously fascinating and heartbreaking about this is that it is being carried out, **not** by enemies from the **outside**, but by enemies from **within** Christianity - by those who profess Christ as Lord and Saviour!

The methods Satan is using to accomplish this transformation are amazingly simple, yet so very subtle. Over the next few weeks, I will be writing about them here, but let's start where it began - with the changing of what Christians think of when they hear important terms in their vocabulary.

The late Dr. Walter Martin, whom I had the distinct privilege of meeting the night before he died, was one of the world's foremost authorities on the cults. He often said that one of the characteristics of the pseudo-Christian cults in attempting to recruit people from churches is to retain the terms that biblical Christianity uses, but to **redefine** them so as to fit into their twisted theology. The result is that the cultists "**SOUND**" like Christians, but they operate using **entirely different meanings** to the same words **we** use, thus luring unsuspecting people into their fold.

This method has proven to be very effective: people who hear about "Jesus Christ" in church, upon hearing a cultist invoke His name, think that the cultist is talking about the same person they are thinking about....**but they're NOT!** The cultist, knowing that this is what's happening, manipulates the church member to the fullest extent, and, more often than we would like to admit, is successful in leading the unsuspecting prospect out of his church and into their cult, all because he started out using the **same terminology** they use, but with **different meanings**.

Today, these same methods used by the pseudo-Christian cultists are being used with frightening success in churches across the nation - **not by out-and-out cultists, but by professing Christians inside the Church!** As one of the evidences that we truly live in the last paragraph of the last page of the last letter of church history (see Revelation 1:19, Chapters 2 & 3, and 4:1), Christians and churches across the world, and especially in affluent America, are **redefining** the terms used in the Church. By changing the definitions of key words and phrases like "**worship**", "**Christ-centered**", "**praise**", "**spirit-filled**", and others like them, mankind is unknowingly being prepared by Satan himself for the one-world religion of the Antichrist that will take over immediately following the Rapture of the Christians of the Church Age.

The one-world religion that is to come is the antithesis of all that is real and true about Bible Christianity - it is a counterfeit: **a reverse image of the real and true**. In fact, it is **so** different that, if placed side by side with true Christianity, the differences

would be glaringly obvious. If Satan were to wait until the Rapture has occurred to present his counterfeit religion to mankind, it would be SO radically different that it would, in quite many instances, be summarily rejected.

Therefore, he has, instead, opted to use a technique called **“nudging”** to slowly - ever so slowly - push Christianity (and other world religions as well) nearer and nearer toward the image of his counterfeit. The intent of this process is, that, when the Antichrist comes on the scene after the Rapture of the Church, the fundamental elements of this false religion will already be widely accepted **and practiced** by millions across the globe. This will result in a smooth transition into the full-fledged idolatry, blasphemy, and sacrilege for the Antichrist’s one-world religion.

One of the first things Satan uses to get control of a church and, thus, begin this process, is to begin manipulating the **music portion of the services**. By taking over the **music**, he can easily turn true worship into counterfeit “worship” - all he needs is a little time.

Good Bible students know that Satan’s manipulation of music isn’t new - he was using a counterfeit form of God’s standard for music in the Garden of Eden, seduced Eve with it, and, thus, got her to manipulate her husband into disobeying God’s command (see Ezekiel 28 and Genesis 3). He used it then, and he’s using it now. The difference **should be** that, while Eve didn’t understand this, **we can**.

An example of this redefining of terms can be found in a very common word used in churches - **WORSHIP**. Most Christians have no idea what biblical worship really is. Baptist Pastor Mark Mitchell does an excellent job of explaining what true worship is:

*True worship revolves around the **Word of God** - Jesus said that the Father is looking for those to worship in Spirit and Truth (John 4:24). This means our worship is to be guided by the Word of God and led by the Spirit of God. Jesus also said that the job of the Holy Ghost is to point you to Christ (John 15:26). The Word of God is Christ centered and so our worship should be Christ Centered. Our worship is to be led by the Spirit of God and so our worship should be toward that very thing that the Holy Ghost is to point us to. When we fail this we walk away from true worship (John 4:24).*

*Therefore, we can rightly conclude that the Holy Ghost never points us to a personal worship experience. Because His job is to point us to Christ and Christ alone. Much like our prayers, our worship is to be done toward the Father because of Christ and led by the Spirit and guided by the Word. True worship is a complete focus on God and not at all on our selves. **When we begin to be concerned for our own personal experience then we have lost true worship.***

*...when we worship God we are to do so with no concern for self or personal experience. ...When we free ourselves of ourselves and love our One True and Living God with this freedom concept, then the church begins true worship that Glorifies God (John 17:20-26).*

Now - contrast that with what is going on in churches today,

and you get an idea of what I am talking about: an **experience** focused on how **we** feel, how **we** see things, how **we** relate to God and His work in **our** lives. Instead of focusing on the glory and awesomeness of HIM, we’re taught to focus on **self**.

The one-world religion of the Antichrist will have, as it’s centerpiece, something they will call “worship”. Unfortunately, instead of true, biblical worship, it will be an **activity** that results in a **feeling**, whereas biblical worship is an **attitude** that results in a closer communion with God through the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the Word. Now, in order to get mankind to think that the counterfeit definition of worship - that it is something we enter in to, something we feel, something we experience - is correct, Satan has to get those who are involved in worship to **redefine it** to mean that. But it can’t happen too fast, or people will resist and reject this false definition.

Enter in the **“nudgers”** - those who slowly “nudge” the church away from true, biblical worship - towards the substitute definition - one inch at a time. The nudgers like to open a church service with catchy phrases like **“Welcome to Worship!”**, **“Something GOOD Is Going To Happen To YOU!”**, etc., nudging the people towards the idea that worship is something they “do” - something they “experience”. On one very famous church’s website, the man leading “worship” in a “contemporary” service is quoted as saying, with regard to that type of service, that their purpose is:

*“...to lead people in a vibrant worship experience that is not diffused by issues of style.”* He also said, *“It’s not about contemporary music - it’s about creating a spirit of worship”*.

So, they’re redefining “worship” to mean **“MUSIC”** - to those who are nudging Christendom towards the one-world religion of the Tribulation, worship is something we **feel** through the music. In fact, they admit that they are creating a spirit of worship! This, of course, isn’t true, biblical worship, but that’s not what they’re after - **they’re after an feeling-based experience that focuses on feelings, not on the indwelling Holy Spirit, and certainly not the Word of God!** But, in order to achieve this goal of creating a spirit of worship, they have to use music that appeals to the **flesh**, because the flesh is where we feel things, and old-fashioned hymns don’t elicit that kind of a response. So, they nudge the church towards this experience-based religion by **blending** the musical styles. The ultimate goal being, of course, to eventually wean the people totally off of Spirit-filled music and onto flesh-centered music.

By equating the feelings they get through the flesh (rhythm) dominated music with the true filling of the Holy Spirit, the nudgers are not only substituting a feelings-based experience for true Spirit-filled worship, they are also inoculating people against truly Spirit-filled music! It’s all so very subtle, and, if you don’t know what’s happening, you get nudged toward the edge of abyss with the rest of the herd, never realizing you’re an accomplice in the compromising with the evil world system Satan operates, all for the explicit purpose of getting folks ready for the one-world religion of the Antichrist.

- more next week

### ***NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK***

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Caryn Quinnelly  
Cradle Roll 2: Derek Quinnelly

6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Piper Martin  
Cradle Roll 2: Ryan Quinnelly

Wed. Eve. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: LeAnna White  
Cradle Roll 2: Seth White

### ***AND THE PEOPLE CAME...***

*Week of December 27, 2009*

Sunday Morning Service ----- 30  
*No Evening or Mid-week Services Due To The Weather*

### ***AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...***

*Week of December 27, 2009*

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,284.00  
*Total Received for Week of 12/27/09:* \$ 1,284.00

*Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed  
to operate the church  
EACH WEEK,  
as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00* 🙏

### ***FUND DRIVE REPORTS***

***We Are Suspending Our Specific Fund  
Drives Until Our Regular Weekly  
Offerings Come Back Up To Where They  
Need To Be. Please Give As Much As You  
Can To Help Us Catch Up After The  
Extremely Low Giving We Experienced  
This Summer And Fall.***



Visit Us Online At - [www.southheightsbaptist.com](http://www.southheightsbaptist.com)

### ***WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED***

- 1. Admit that you are a sinner.***
- 2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.***
- 3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.***
- 4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).***
- 5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.***



### ***Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!***

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go *up*. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start *today* - OK? Thank you.

### ***Church Directory***

Todd W. White ----- Pastor  
Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist  
Dickie Eberle ----- Greeter, Custodian  
Larry Mathews, Caryn Quinnelly, Todd W. White ----- S.S. Teachers  
Larry & Mary Byars, Brian & Charity Crawford,  
Dwayne English, Geroux family ----- Outreach  
Flowers ----- Hannah and Shirley White